

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application in view of the above amendments and following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-35 are pending in this application. Claims 10-35 are withdrawn from consideration. By this amendment, Claims 1 and 2 are amended; and no claims are canceled or added herewith.

In the outstanding Office Action, the Abstract was objected to; Claims 1-9 were objected to; Claims 1 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,441,247 to Quilliam; Claims 2, 3, 6 and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Quilliam in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,205,918 to Takahashi; Claim 5 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Quilliam in view of Takahashi and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,543,894 to Carolan; Claim 7 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Quilliam in view of Takahashi and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,098,536 to Ohkawa; and Claim 4 was indicated as including allowable subject matter.

With respect to the Abstract, the Abstract is amended by the present amendment. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection to the Abstract is respectfully requested.

With respect to the objection to Claims 1-9, Claims 1 and 2 are amended by the present amendment. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection to Claims 1-9 is respectfully requested.

Applicants appreciate the Examiner indicating that Claim 4 includes allowable subject matter. However, for at least the reasons set forth below, Applicants respectfully submit that all claims are in condition for allowance.

Specifically, the applied art does not teach or suggest an intermediate conveyor that includes a plurality of paper transport means disposed along at intervals along the

intermediate transport path and a plurality of detecting means for detecting at least one leading and trailing edge of the paper being transported, the detecting means disposed at a plurality of intervals from upstream to downstream, and wherein at least one of the detecting means is located before and after each of the plurality of paper transport means, as recited in Claim 1.

Instead, Quilliam discloses as best shown in Figure 2, a microswitch 52 located in the sheet transport path. The microswitch 52 detects the presence or absence of a sheet in the transport path. If a sheet is present, the microswitch 52 opens an electrical circuit. The microswitch 52 and a microswitch 94 are both provided to detect the absence of a sheet of paper in the transport path.

Takahashi discloses a paper size sensor 56 mounted on the paper tray 21. An output of the sensor 56 indicates whether or not the papers 22 on the tray 21 have a preselected length. A paper passage sensor 46 is responsive to an interval between the time when the leading edge of the paper 22 reaches sensor 46 and the time when the trailing edge of paper 22 moves away from sensor 46.

Accordingly, the features discussed above in the claimed invention are not taught or suggested in the applied art. Quilliam discloses a transport roller 78 and a roller 84. Sensor 52 is positioned before roller 84 and sensor 94 is positioned after. However, there are no further sensors in the transport path, for example, no sensors associated with roller 78.

Takahashi merely discloses sensor 46 that is located in the transport path. There are no additional sensors located in the transport path. Instead, sensor 56 is located on paper tray 21.

The features set forth in the claimed invention discussed above, provide sensors at predescribed intervals upstream and downstream along the paper transport direction in the intermediate transport path. In this way, paper of differing length can be detected along the

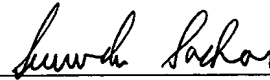
paper transport direction that corresponds to different paper sizes. The features discussed in the claimed invention above are not taught or suggested in the applied art.

Consequently, for the reasons discussed in detail above, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application, and the present application is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. Therefore, a notice of allowance is earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner deem that any further action is necessary to place this application in even better form for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned representative at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

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